

## Peace Process in Afghanistan: Conflicting actors and contrasting interests

Mohammad Ismael Ammar

### Abstract

The four-decade conflict in Afghanistan is the longest civil war in region's history, which is driven by different domestic and external factors. The foreign intervention in late 2001 provided a new political context to abstract the country from the abyss caused by the conflict. However, the intervention in the forms of military, political, and economic largesse failed to restore peace and stability to the country. In the immediate state reconfiguration under the auspices of Hamid Karzai, the Afghan state attempted to forge working relationships with opposing forces and absorb them into the state structures. Whilst most of these efforts have yielded only little results, if any, the prolonged violence has failed some of the warring parties to pursue their political objective through violence means, thus, encouraged them to return to settlement through negotiations. This article uses an analytic-qualitative method examine the factors that can potentially contribute to or mitigate the premises of a durable peace in Afghanistan. The article hypothesizes that Afghanistan is trapped in the nexus of state fragility and competing regional and trans-regional interests.

**Keywords:** Afghanistan's peace, failed government, Taliban, regional and international actor, contrasting interests.

## A Review of the Strategic Shift Towards the East in Afghanistan's Foreign Policy: The Case of the People's Democratic Party

Joma Khan Mohammadi

### Abstract

Afghanistan occupied a sensitive place in global politics during the "Great Game" and "Cold War" eras, and any turbulence in this territory could disrupt the world order. Afghanistan's foreign policy underwent a sudden and rapid shift towards the East under the People's Democratic Party in 1970s, replacing the traditional affiliation with the West. The build-up of a close affiliation with the East, particularly the Soviets, could be blamed as the chief, if not the only, reason for the protracted crisis in Afghanistan. This shift was initiated by the Daud Khan's government only to be further expanded by the People's Democratic Party. Today, after half a century, several questions about the rationale, modality, and implications of this rapid shift remain shrouded in mystery. Regardless of the features of this shift, it nonetheless changed power dynamics and parameters of regional and distant interactions, primarily manifested in the reconfiguration of the East-West interactions, growth in ethnic nationalism, intra-state conflicts, and more recently, the emergence of Islamic extremism. As such, the People's Democratic Party will be remembered by the history for its role in facilitating and inflicting a profound destruction of Afghanistan's infrastructures and societal fabrics.

**Keywords:** strategic shift, People's Democratic Party, foreign policy, Former Soviet, communist ideology.

## A Glance at One Hundred Years of Afghanistan`s Foreign Policy

Dr. Farooq Ansari

### Abstract

Afghanistan`s new foreign policy developed under King Amanullah Khan and after the country gained its political independence from Britain in 1919 and in fact it is then when diplomacy became meaningful. However, the Afghanistan`s functioning foreign policy fell apart following King Amanullah Khan`s departure from the country. Nevertheless, Mohammad Nadir Shah and his two brothers strived to maintain the balance in Afghanistan`s relations. In the wake of World War II and in the early cold war the country`s foreign policy remained cautious which continued until Sardar Mohammad Daoud Khan era who, having prioritised Pashtunistan in his foreign policy towards post-natal Pakistan, approached the Soviets whilst Pakistan became US dependent. Afghanistan`s foreign policy focused on regaining the balance between two powers in the decade of democracy and when Sardar Muhammad Daoud took power again coup d`état, he prioritized Pashtunistan issue again and pursued a policy of becoming closer to the Soviet. However, in 1975 he had a big shift towards west and its allies which finally cost his life. The 1978 coup regime put Afghanistan on the eastern bloc and by contrast the governments of Mujahidin and the Taliban must be treated as the periods of Afghanistan isolation. When a new government took over in 2001 as a result of Bonn Agreement, Afghanistan reestablished extensive foreign relations.

**Keywords:** Afghanistan, foreign policy, King Amanullah, Mahmud Tarzi, Mohammad Zahir Shah, Sardar Mohammad Daoud.

## Prerequisites of Scientific Diplomacy in Afghanistan's Foreign Policy

Amanullah Shafaie

### Abstract

Scientific diplomacy is a relatively new yet significant component of foreign policy, proferring a unique capability to serve the national interests. However, Afghanistan's current infrastructures are unable to use this type of diplomacy in their foreign policy effectively. This article seeks to assess the importance of this type of diplomacy in international relations, and its wider application to the case of Afghanistan. In so doing, the article examines Afghanistan's suitability for this type of diplomacy and to determine the prerequisites of the country's foreign policy development processes in relation to scientific diplomacy, also called "science and technology diplomacy." The findings of this research indicate that Afghanistan's foreign policy is incapable, thus unsuccessful to leverage the potential that this type of diplomacy offers. The findings also suggest that since Afghanistan lacks any serious technological innovations and knowledge, it is highly unlikely that regional and international actors would engage in any serious interactions with Afghanistan within the domains of science and technology. Against this perspective, the article suggests Afghanistan should: (1) invest in scientific education and research; (2) prioritize science and technology; (3) encourage foreign policy stakeholders to value scientific and technological skills and knowledge as instrument of safeguarding the national interests.

**Keywords:** diplomacy, scientific diplomacy, science and technology, foreign policy, Afghanistan.

## The Evolution Path and Role of Diplomacy in Foreign Policy

Mohammad Naser Arefi

### Abstract

Diplomacy as old as human history. However, the phenomenon has undergone serious conceptual evolutions as the world has grown more complicated and interconnected in trade, capital flow, and exchange of data. The evolution of diplomacy has been phased and is categorized as ancient diplomacy, primary diplomacy, classic diplomacy and modern diplomacy, with each phase experiencing profound transformations. Whilst humans inherently resort to violence to protect their interests, violence cannot last forever and ultimately requires a means for peaceful conclusion. Diplomacy, in its simplest role, functions as just this means, and its application to resolve deadly conflicts has grown intensively in the last few hundred years.

**Keywords:** diplomacy, evolution, relations, foreign policy, states.



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## The Prospect of Human Rights in International Relations

### An interview with Dr. Mohammad Amin Ahmadi

Note: "Human Rights in International Relations" is a book written by David P. Forsythe, a former distinguished professor of political science at the University of Nebraska . This book was first published by Cambridge University in 2000 and its subsequent editions were released to book market in 2006, 2012 and 2018. Dr. Mohammad Amin Mohammadi has translated the third edition of this book into Farsi and Avicenna University press has published it in Kabul. The first edition has been translated into Chinese, Turkish, Korean and Bulgarian. The author has described himself as a pragmatist liberal and laid the groundwork of this book in early 1990s, following the collapse of USSR. Therefore, the theoretical foundation of this book is based on liberalist thoughts and is especially influenced by Fukuyama's perspective. The author treats today's human rights as the product of western liberal democracy and systems and expresses cautious optimism about its future in the early editions. Furthermore, the author considers the hegemony of realism over international relations a theoretical obstacle to improving human rights and expresses concerns over China, Russia and Iran's acquisition of power without liberalistic reforms. Moreover, the emergence of Daesh (ISIS) and Donald Trump's politics has further given rise to the author's concerns. In this interview, Mohammad Qasem Erfani has discussed major themes of the book with Dr. Mohammad Amin Ahmadi.

**Keywords:** human rights, international relations, liberalism, realism, non-state actors, soft laws.

## Think Tanks and Foreign Policy Challenges of Emerging Powers

James G. McGann

Mohammad Salem Naji

### Abstract

Boundaries of domestic and international politics are increasingly blurred in the globalization era and states are unable to draw policies not taking into account international organizations, news agencies and terrorist groups. Foreign policy agents encounter vast information for decision making which makes data use a challenge. Moreover, think tanks function practically in similar ways in all countries though their extension and facilities are different; therefore, collection, analysis, interpretation and categorization of information are themes that could impact behaviors of the governments. Usually, think tanks are three categories; states routine bureaucracy, universities research and political parties research sections; and at the same time emerging powers and particularly BRICS member countries have transformed the political and economic order of the world. Hence, present study seeks to review think tanks role in emerging powers policymaking.

**Keywords:** think tank, foreign policy, emerging powers, decision-makers.

## BEHIND THE SCENE: The Contributions of Think Tanks in U.S. Policy-Making

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### Abstract

Think tanks are policy research and analysis organizations that provide systematic analysis to enable them make informed and quality decisions about domestic and international policy related issues. Over the past century, US think tanks have been very influential in framing policy issues by providing timely analyses. In the last two decades, there is proliferation of think tank across the United States. This paper aims to chronicles and analyzes the evolution of think tanks phenomena. An effort has been made to explore the impact of these think tanks on policy process in the American politics.

**Keywords:** Think Tanks, United States, Policy making, research organizations



## An introduction to the role of Think Tanks in Foreign Policymaking

Mohammad Qasem Erfani

### Abstract

The primary question of this article is: what are think tanks and what is their role and relevance in foreign and public policymaking? The findings of this study suggest that think tanks have grown exponentially and astonishingly since 1980s. Think tanks have emerged to fill the gap between the academic environment and policymaking and represent the power of knowledge in improved decision making. The latest survey indicates that over 8,000 think tanks operate across the world, most of which are located in industrial and emerging powers. Notwithstanding, foreign policy and international issues such as security, peace and environmental development are topics for research, assessment and analysis by the world's top research centers. The findings of this research show a direct relationship between think tanks and decision-makings resulting in expansion and increase of an actor's power in the international system. A number of top centres for foreign policy and international studies are briefly introduced in three categories.

**Keywords:** think tank, strategic studies, policymaking, foreign policy, international relations